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The Yearly Rendezvous

demands sight of everything that may be offered by the other party to the trade. If there is something there that attracts him, he, too, will produce his wares, but discovers very quickly how much or how little they are coveted. If he himself is not willed to dispose of some particular thing, he obstinately adheres to his refusal, though ten times the value be offered him. The peltry bought from the Indians must be carefully beaten and aired, at peril of having objectionable troops billeted on you. The Indians, accustomed to every kind of uncleanliness, seem to have a special predilection for a certain kind of domestic animal, and even to consider it a delicacy. So, for instance, I have repeatedly seen an old granddam summering before the tent with her gray-haired spouse, and busily picking the "heavy cavalry" from his head. But the fingers that deftly caught the prisoner with equal deftness carried him to the mouth, where the uphappy creature was buried alive. *Chacun a son goût!*

The rendezvous usually lasts a week. Then the different parties move off to their destinations and the plain that today resounded with barbarous music, that was thronged with people of both races, with horses and dogs, returns to its old quiet, interrupted only now and then by the muffled roar of the buffalo and the howl of the wolf. As yet I had had indefinite plans as to how far I should extend my trip. The fur company which we had joined intended resting in the vicinity for some weeks, and then returning

with a cargo of furs to the borders of Missouri on the same road by which we had come up here. The greater part of the rest of our company planned to go to the Columbia River; some, too, from there to California. The latter scheme attracted me particularly. I thought of getting to the Columbia in some months, going to California in the fall, spending the winter there, and returning in the spring by way of Santa Fe to the United States. I therefore joined that party. Of late the temperature had been pretty high at noon; the nights, on the other hand, cool. For the first time I felt somewhat unwell, but not enough so to prevent a further journey. The most difficult part of our trip, the crossing of the main chain of the mountains, still lay before us. Capt. Bonneville had already penetrated to the Green River valley with wagons; but, as far as I know, no attempt has as yet been made to go over the mountains themselves with them, but horses and mules alone are used for transportation of baggage.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

THE CROSSING OF THE MOUNTAINS—THE GRIZZLY BEAR

ON JULY 10th we left the Green River and the rendezvous. Our party consisted of the former traveling companions, of Captain Armedinger, the agent of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Hall on the Snake River, who had visited the rendezvous with about a dozen of his men, of some trappers going back again to their craft, and of several hundred Indians, chiefly Flatheads, on their return to their home across the mountains. The mixed procession presented indeed an original appearance. The inhabitants of a great city would give much to see such a caravan passing through their streets. In motley confusion whites and Indians, squaws and children, scurried past each other. The men let their eyes rove about in search of game, and as soon as a shy antelope came in view, a great blood-thirsting gang rushed after it, to return after some time generally without any success. The squaws,

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who must attend to the packing, rattled past us with their long tent poles. Anon they would stop to rearrange the pack, to gather herbs and roots, or to quiet the babies. The position of the latter can hardly be called very pleasant. The Indian women carry their nurslings in a case of buffalo hide consisting of a long leather piece with a projection below as foot rest. On this back piece the youngster is laid flat. In front is an arched piece of leather fastened to both sides of the back of the case, enclosing the whole body from the neck to the feet. Only the uncovered head is free, protruding from this little box. The sight inevitably calls to mind the figure of Egyptian mummies. In walking, this little papoose case with its contents is thrown over the back and held with a strap over the forehead or chest of the mother. But in riding it is bound to one side of the saddle, and the little head nods in time to the trot or gallop of the horse. As soon as the child can sit alone, it is freed from its prison house and is fastened to the horse, wrapped in buffalo hide. The first thing for which it learns to grasp is the bridle or the whip. So it is no wonder that the Indians are all born riders and that the squaws have usually a better seat a-horseback than white men. The direction we took to cross the mountains was at first southwest, and afterwards northwest. The chain in front of us, which we have to cross, is much lower than the Wind River Mountains. No more snow peaks tower out of it; only patches of snow can be seen here and there, which

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probably wholly melt away later in the summer. The naked, jagged forms of rock have also disappeared; and in their stead we have an even, continuous, thickly wooded mountain chain, with narrow valleys and ravines, from which cool mountain streams gush forth. This chain stretches in a rather straight line from north to south, and then, forming an acute angle at the southern end, extends northwestwardly between the Bear River and the Snake River. On the eastern slope of these mountains several brooks arise which all pour into the Green River; from the northwestern slope come the waters which flow toward the Bear River. We descended about eighty miles in southwestern course along the eastern slope, and crossed the acute angle above mentioned to reach the northwestern slope. On the first day we made only eight miles. We crossed Horse Creek and camped on Lead Creek. The road led over plateaus toward the mountains. The next morning we were still in similar country, but at noon we reached a little meadow, enclosed by steep heights, through which meanders a rippling brook with cool water. From now on we had to wind our way through wooded hills. We generally followed the course of brooks through narrow ravines, on whose steep sides the animals had to climb in single file in a long line. On both sides were acclivities, often very steep, overgrown with heavy pine and cottonwood. At times we had to clamber over the mountains themselves through thick pine timber to get from one ravine to another. The geologi-

cal formation was primitive throughout. There was particularly much basalt. Here and there, too, one finds traces of that same lava which we later found spread over great areas. The vegetation was rather luxuriant. A quantity of wild flax particularly struck us. The scenery was generally wild and romantic, but I was unable to enjoy its beauties, for I had felt somewhat unwell even at the Green River. With the hope that traveling would soon restore me, I had forborne as yet to make use of the medicines I had with me. But the symptoms became worse. I feared that I was getting a severe bilious fever, and felt myself obliged to make up for my omission. On the fourth day I felt so weak that during the afternoon I could hardly keep my seat on the horse. So I let the whole train pass me, tied my horse and threw myself on the ground, indifferent as to what might become of me. Complete listlessness possessed me. The whole nation of Blackfeet might have swarmed around me; I would not have stirred from the spot. I soon fell into a feverish sleep. My faithful dog (I had a young German hunting dog with me), having missed me in the caravan, had in the meanwhile returned to me. When I woke the sun was setting. My mule had torn himself loose, and thrown off his pack, but was still close by. I felt a little stronger, packed up once more and followed the trail of the caravan. I had ridden some miles, when one of my traveling companions, who in the meanwhile had pitched their night camp and then missed me for the

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first time, came to meet me. The camp was about three miles away. We reached it that evening, having seen on the way a grizzly bear that ran away from us. The camp was on Smith's Fork, the first water on the northwestern slope, which direction we followed from now on. The character of the country remained substantially the same. We had constantly dense pine forests about us; but the cottonwoods had disappeared. On the fifth day we reached Thomas Fork, on whose banks great quantities of pure, good-tasting common salt were lying. Most of us took along a supply. Such deposits of salt are said to occur at several other places in the mountains; so this most precious of condiments is not very dear there. At noon next day we reached Tullick's Fork. On the road a grizzly bear was shot. As this dreaded animal will cut a figure several times in the adventures of our journey, I will here add some remarks about it.

The grizzly bear (*Ursus horribilis*, Ord.) is distinguished from other members of the bear family by the almost straight profile of his face and by his longer claws. The hair, short on the forehead and long and thick on the rest of the body, shows a peculiar mixture of white, brown and black, with many shadings. The ears are short and rounded; the forehead somewhat convex. The eyes are very small. The short tail is hidden in the shaggy hair. The curved claws are three to five inches long. The whole length of the full grown bear is about ten feet; his height, three to four feet; his weight, seven

hundred to eight hundred pounds. He cannot climb trees like the black bear, but has fearful strength and dexterity. He often drags a whole buffalo for some distance, and runs almost as fast as a horse. He lives partly on meat, partly on fruits and roots. He is found oftener on the eastern than on the western side of the Rocky Mountains. When he is hungry or has been irritated he attacks whatever comes in his way. One blow of his paw is enough to knock a man down. But under other circumstances he runs away from man, and defends himself only when pursued. With such qualities it is no wonder that he is the dread of hunters. A bullet through brain or heart will end him, but in all other parts of the body he survives numerous wounds. A good hunter therefore, does not shoot until he is within ten or twenty feet of him. When the females are with young they live very retired, so that I have never heard of a hunter that shot a pregnant grizzly she bear. The meat of the grizzly is very palatable. Along the back there is solid white fat, a hand thick. The grizzly we found on this occasion was still young. The dogs of the Indians discovered him in a thicket, but he wouldn't budge from it. The Indians surrounded him on horseback, and shot at him. Whenever he assumed a threatening attitude, they all ran away. The dogs, however, seemed to check his anger. He would not leave his hiding place. Finally one of our hunters approached within ten feet of him, and laid him low with a single bullet.

The Crossing of the Mountains—The Grizzly Bear

From Tullick's Fork we entered upon more open country. The western slope of the Rocky Mountains has no more deep valleys than the eastern, but passes inperceptibly into broad plateaus. In the afternoon we crossed over a treeless, rather level prairie to the Bear River, and encamped there. The Bear River rises in the Eastern Mountains, a chain toward the south, goes in a semi-circle first northward, then down northwestwardly and empties into the Great Salt Lake (also called Lake Bonneville). It is a clear stream, not very wide or deep. Mostly willows grow on its banks. My illness was by this time pretty well subdued, though I felt very weak for some weeks. Several of our company also were unwell, the cause for which could probably be found in the hot days and cool nights, the drinking of cold mountain water, and the eating of dried meat, which we had to eat for want of fresh. An emetic or purgative, promptly administered, usually brought speedy relief.

On the seventh day we went up the right shore of the Bear River by a fairly level and open road and encamped that evening on its banks. Our night camp was at too attractive a place to be merely mentioned; for we were at one of the most remarkable spots in the whole mountain country—at the Beer Spring, so well known to every mountain traveler.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE BEER SPRING—JOURNEY TO FORT HALL

AS THERE are persons whose expression fascinates and wins us through something that we keenly feel but cannot clearly understand, so is it also true of some natural scenes. Such an impression took possession of me at first view of the so-called Beer Spring. I have looked on finer and more majestic scenes, but never found a more home-like place than this valley, produced out of the wrecks of prior geological revolutions, or one on which Nature had bestowed more of everlasting peace. Surrounded by banks of lava, numberless mineral springs bubble forth out of the calcined ground; a charming cedar grove invites the weary wanderer to its shades and the clear babbling Bear River rolls its ripples through the valley of peace.

We approached the valley from the east on the seventh day after leaving Green River (on July 16th). The way thither was sprinkled with scattered

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pieces of lava, and satisfied us that we were on the edge of the so-called great lava plain which is said to stretch in northwesterly direction about one hundred miles across the Snake River.

This lava consists of grayish black, porous, very heavy and hard pieces, varying much in size, sometimes covering the ground in flat layers, sometimes however in walls ten or fifteen feet high and several hundred feet in length, going down vertically on one side and running back to the level on the other in one connected mass. Nowhere in this region could I find anything like craters to whose extinct volcanic activity in prior ages these results could be ascribed. They seemed rather to have originated in so-called earth fires. The neighborhood of Beer Spring forms a center of this land of slags. At least I have not seen elsewhere these scoriæ, lying flat as well as built in walls, more frequent or more characteristic of the country. About Beer Spring the lava bed is covered with a very white potter's clay. Out of a hill formed of this clay, the white clay hill, arises a clear fresh brook that flows into the Bear River. About half a mile off is the bottom of this valley abounding in springs. It lies in 44° north latitude and 109° west longitude, on the eastern bank of Bear River. It is shaped like an amphitheater. On the south it is bounded by the Bear River, running from east to west, and by hills beyond the river, covered with pine; on the three other sides it is enclosed by a chain of low sandy, cone-shaped hills, in part bare, in part

crowned with pine and cedar. The valley thus enclosed is half a mile to a mile in diameter, and covered as to the greater part with a cedar grove. This evergreen cedar *(Juniperus Virginiana)* is the same which is also found in the eastern parts of the United States. It is only found in sandy soil on low mountains or the slopes of higher ones. It tends rather to thickness and breadth than to height, and is never crowded, though forming little woods. Unfortunately travelers have cut down and burned many trees of this grove. Its total destruction could rob the valley of one of its most precious ornaments. I fixed my camp under an old cedar, near one of the springs, that here bubble up from the ground. Exhausted by the burden and heat of the day, we all refreshed ourselves with this delicious draught. It was a cool, sparkling water, slightly chalybeate to the taste, with cheering and invigorating effect on the nervous system. So far as I could determine without chemical analysis, it is some acid of iron with abundant carbonic acid and slight admixture of salts. Addition of a little sugar and tartaric acid made it effervesce rapidly; in quiet condition, the carbonic acid escaped in little pearly bubbles. This pearling and effervescing has given the water the prosaic name of Beer Spring, since the term beer is in general use for all effervescing liquids. These springs appear either singly in perpendicularly walled openings out of the earth, about a foot in circumference and several feet deep; or else several of them form a common basin.

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The water seems to be the same in all of them. On the margin of these springs there is usually a deposit of a red-brown oxide of iron, and various limestone formations with petrefactions are in the vicinity. The bottom of the spring is a soft mud. The water level seems to be the same in all of them. They have no outlet, although they are obviously in subterranean connection with each other, as well as with the Bear River, close by. For even in the river itself a number of such springs are seen to bubble up, and the stones on the shore, that are washed by these little fountains, are also coated with a red-brown crust. Several of these springs, shaded from the sun, which I tested with the thermometer, showed, all of them, a temperature of 54° F., while the air in the shade stood at 76°. A warm spring, some thousands of feet lower down the river, and close by it, deserves special mention. The spring issues from a block of lime, which it formed itself, in all probability, in the course of time. The stream, as thick as an arm, spouts out in abrupt pulsations, and runs into the river over the rock which is coated with oxide of iron and white crystals of salt. With the air at a temperature of 76° F., this water showed 84°. Its taste was like that of the cold springs, only weaker. About six feet off are two smaller openings, one of which is obstructed, while the other is still open. From the latter there issues with puffing noise, also in spurts, which are not timed, however, with those of the water, a gas mingled with vapor. This gas has a

somewhat pungent and benumbing odor. Some of my companions thought it weak sulphurated hydrogen; to me it seemed merely carbonic acid gas. The puffing noise deceptively resembles the well-known sound of an engine, for which reason is also known by the name "Steamboat."

Gladly would I have spent some time in this most interesting valley, but my companions, less enthusiastic than I, insisted on pushing on; and so we left it the next morning. On our seven-day journey from the Green River to the Beer Spring we had covered almost two hundred miles. Many Indians, for whom we traveled too rapidly, had remained behind. Here our company divided again. The greater part of them went northwestwardly to Fort Hall on the Snake River, about fifty or sixty miles distant: while about a dozen others traveled northwardly to hunt, and then also go, with fresh provisions of meat, to Fort Hall. The latter party consisted of my old traveling companions that intended to go to the Columbia River. I joined them. In the mountains themselves we had seen no game save some grizzly bears; and so had lived on the dried meat which we had bought of the Indians at the rendezvous. The projected trip to the Columbia, however, on which we would have to cross a wide, barren, sandy plateau, made fresh meat supplies a necessity, which determined us to make this side trip. The neighborhood of the Beer Spring does not abound in game; further north, however, toward the Snake River, we hoped

The Beer Spring—Journey to Fort Hall

to find more of it. The leader of our little party was Mr. Richardson, an experienced mountaineer, who had been with us from the beginning of our journey. On July 17th we left the Beer Spring. Between Snake River and Bear River there is an unimportant chain of mountains, a continuation of the one down whose northwestern slope we had traveled. Two little streams, Gray Creek and Blackfoot Creek, have their sources in these mountains, and flow into the Snake River in a northwesterly course. We crossed these mountains, and zigzagged northeastwardly and northwestwardly in the angle formed by the three streams last mentioned.

On the first day we only saw some shy antelope; on the second day we saw two buffalo, and killed one of them. The country was broken, the ground sandy, and game was scarce. For three days we remained on a little brook, while some of us were sent out to hunt. In all this time only three buffalo, a buffalo calf and a grizzly bear were shot. If ever a sojourn was tedious to me, it was this one. The surroundings were depressingly desolate. Only hungry ravens croaked around, as if in mockery of us; and as the Blackfeet frequently roam through the country, we had to keep as quiet as possible. No one was permitted to fire a gun or go hunting, save the hunters regularly chosen for the purpose. On the seventh day we finally started off again. I felt a load off my heart as I mounted once more, and turned my back on this uncanny country. On the same day we saw

in the distance the so-called Three Buttes, three steep snow peaks, across the Snake River, visible from afar. The sandy valley of the Snake River was spread out before us. On the eighth day we crossed the Blackfoot Creek, followed its course for a time, and finally on the ninth day camped near the Snake River, about eight miles below Fort Hall. The next day, July 26th, I rode with some others to the fort.

The Bear Spring—Journey to Fort Hall

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE COLUMBIA RIVER—THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

FORT HALL lies on the left bank of the Snake River, between the mouths of the Blackfoot and Portneuf Creeks. It was built by Capt. Wyeth, and sold by him some years later, when he left the mountains, to the Hudson's Bay Company, in whose possession it has remained up to the present. It is the most southern fort which this English company has pushed into the Oregon Territory of the United States. The fort lies hard by the river, and is built in a square of about eighty by eighty feet, suggestive of barracks. The style is essentially that of Fort Laramie, except that the outer walls, ten to twelve feet high, are constructed in this case out of partly baked brick instead of wood. A small cannon is in the courtyard. The fort owns many horses and six cows. The whole garrison consisted of six men; among them two Sandwich Islanders and a German. The clerks of the fort were Mr.

Armedinger and Mr. Walker. We had learned to know the former as a jovial companion at the rendezvous. Both showed themselves very obliging to us, and furnished in this respect an agreeable contrast to the often brusque behavior of agents at American forts. The day of our arrival we were invited to a supper in the fort, which would be deemed quite frugal in civilized life, but which, in this wilderness, consisted of the most delicious dishes which we had tasted since we started, namely, bread, butter, milk, dried buffalo meat and tea with rum. No Paris meal composed with all a gourmand's art ever tasted better to me, than the luxuries (for that country) of this feast on the sand steppes of the Snake River. As we intended to stay here at least eight days to allow our animals to recuperate and to prepare ourselves for the trying journey to the Columbia, I employed the time in making inquiries about the Hudson's Bay Company and the country about the Columbia River, and here give the result:

The Columbia River— The Hudson's Bay Company.

The Snake River (Lewis River) has its source on the western slope of the main chain of the Rockies, and flows in northwesterly direction about eight hundred miles, when it unites with the Clarke River, coming from the northeast, to form the Columbia River, which, after a western course of only two hundred miles, empties into the Pacific Ocean. The Snake River flows through a sandy plateau, in which there can be found almost no game and very little food for the animals. About one hundred miles from

The Columbia River— The Hudson's Bay Company.

the Columbia, the Snake River pierces a spur of the Rockies, the Blue Mountains. The river has a very rapid current, and is broken up by numerous falls, of which the first begin a little below Fort Hall, and has banks of basalt, so steep that one must often go along them for quite a while before finding a place to get water. Below the falls, near the Columbia River, it is full of salmon, which the Indians kill by thousands with the spear, dry and keep in store. Until one comes to that region one must be provided with an ample supply of dried meat, if one does not wish to risk encountering such hardships as Mr. Hunt experienced on his memorable journey thitherward. The broad Snake River valley is in the main sterile country. The climate there is moderately warm. The summers are remarkable for great dryness; for whole months there is neither dew nor rain. The winters are rather cold. Snow is often several feet deep. Westwardly from the Snake River there are several steep mountain chains with many glaciers, dividing this country from California and the Pacific Ocean. The direct road to California is very difficult on account of these mountains. Even unloaded mules can cross them only with great effort. For this reason it is thought preferable for those going to upper California to make a detour via the Columbia River. The distance from Fort Hall to the Columbia is estimated at about six hundred miles. A second fort belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company lies at the junction of the Boisse with the Snake River. The

first English fort on the Columbia is Walla Walla, about nine miles below the Snake River. But the main fort of the Hudson's Bay Company is Vancouver, on the right bank of the Columbia, about ninety miles from its mouth. Furthermore, there is a fort on the Clarke River, Fort Colleville, and several others of less importance on various small rivers that flow into the Columbia. These forts are built like the American ones, meant simply for defense against the Indians, and without military garrisons. Fort George, the Astoria of the past, consists simply of a block-house occupied by only three or four men, whose duty it is to note the arrival of vessels and pilot them. The Columbia River seems to have been known to Spanish seamen. The honor of its first authentic discovery belongs to Captain Robert Gray of Boston, who, sailing under the flag of the United States, discovered it in May, 1792, ascended it for fifteen miles, and gave it the name of his own vessel, Columbia. Two promontories form the entrance to the Columbia River: on the north, Cape Disappointment; on the south, Cape Adams. A sand bank running from north to south for two miles, with, at places, only four and a half fathoms, makes the entrance difficult; but there is on one side a channel of adequate depth, though narrow. For the first ten miles the Columbia is about four miles broad; higher up, to Vancouver, it has an average width of a mile. It is a deep river, carrying much water. Vessels with not more than fourteen feet draught can ascend it for about one

The Columbia River— The Hudson's Bay Company.

The Columbia River— The Hudson's Bay Company

hundred and twenty-five miles; but above that a succession of falls begin, impassable for vessels of every kind, forming obstacles whose removal would be disproportionately expensive.

The land along the Columbia has been described in most recent times as a western paradise. The truth of the matter is that the ground is indeed very fruitful, and well suited for the cultivation of wheat, barley, oats, rice, beans, potatoes, apples, tobacco and the like; but just as good tracts of land can be found in Illinois and Missouri. Besides, the Columbia River itself has only small valleys, which are subject to overflow; and so the valleys of the smaller streams that flow into the Columbia from the north and south are even better. One of the most fertile tracts is the land along the Wallamette, which flows from south to north into the Columbia. Immediately on the seacoast the land is the worst. The chief kinds of wood are white oak and long-leaf pine. Game is scarce, but there is superfluity of fish, especially salmon. The climate in summer is about the same as in the central part of the United States. The summer is distinguished by its dryness; for which reason maize succeeds indifferently. In winter, there is seldom frost or snow; but from October to April there is almost continuous rain, which refreshes the dried grass and makes it green. The fields are usually sown as early as January. These mild winters make this country one of the most suitable for cattle raising. No part of the United States is thought to

excel it therein. Horses, cattle, and sheep—hogs in a less degree—thrive here exceptionally, and multiply with amazing rapidity. The country on the Wallamette is also distinguished in this particular. The settlement at Vancouver is up to now the largest on the Columbia River. The fort is a square building, two or three hundred feet long and broad. In its midst are the various workshops; but the workmen live chiefly outside of the fort in little block houses. The people in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, mostly Canadians, amount to about two hundred, and as for the greater part they have married Indian women, the whole number of inhabitants may be estimated at from seven to eight hundred.

The Columbia River—The Hudson's Bay Company.

The fort has laid out a farm in its vicinity. In 1837, about three thousand acres were in cultivation. The produce was: 8,000 bushels of wheat, 5,500 bushels of barley, 6,000 bushels of oats, 9,000 bushels of peas, and 4,000 bushels of potatoes. Of animals they had in the same year about one thousand head of cattle, seven hundred hogs, two hundred sheep, five hundred horses and forty yoke of draught oxen. In addition they have a great threshing machine, a distillery, and a grist mill. A saw mill, cutting 3,000 feet a day, and served by twenty-eight men and ten yoke of oxen, lies six miles from Vancouver on a little river that flows into the Columbia. The surplus products, chiefly flour and boards, the Hudson's Bay Company exports to the Sandwich Islands and to California. For one thousand feet of boards

The Columbia River— The Hudson's Bay Company.

they get in the Sandwich Islands $60.00 to $100.00. In California, they generally exchange for cattle at $3.00 a head. The company conducts this trade with its own vessels. It owns at present one ship, one brig, one schooner, one sloop and one steamboat. The inner organization of the Hudson's Bay Company is based on strict subordination. The company consists of one hundred shareholders, who are such, however, only for life. Headquarters are in London. The general agents, who live in America (partners), receive one-eighth of the profit on one share, which amounts annually to $4,000 to $5,000; chief traders receive one-sixteenth; clerks receive yearly £100; and laborers £15 to £17 with fixed rations of potatoes, salmon, beans and salt in addition. The company engages its men for five years, and sends them back to their homes if they do not wish to serve longer. Old employes it permits to stay in the country on leave of absence, assigning them land to cultivate. During the time they receive no salary, but can be called into service at any moment. Promotions are made on a system based on rank and age. A yearly meeting of the partners and chief traders is held at York Factory on Hudson's Bay, which meeting has jurisdiction over all employes of the Hudson's Bay Company, and issues its orders from there. Constant communication is maintained between Vancouver and York Factory by land through express messengers. In addition a ship comes yearly from London to the Columbia River to bring fresh merchandise, and to

carry back to England the furs which the company acquires from Indians and trappers in coast and inland trade. Beaver skins are the most profitable part of the cargo. Shipment of salmon has been abandoned. The company receives all its goods from England free of duty, and sells them much cheaper than the American companies. In this way the Hudson's Bay Company is in position to hold all competitors in check, and to maintain an undisputed overlordship over all the regions beyond the Rocky Mountains. The Indians on the Columbia River, already greatly diminished in numbers through disease and excesses, are committed to it so unconditionally that they scarce dare to trade with Americans. As yet, all attempts ventured by Americans against this company have gone to pieces. The Hudson's Bay Company has the advantages of connection by sea, internal union and the protection of the English government. The only settlement made by citizens of the United States is now on the Wallamette. This small stream, flowing from the south to the Columbia, is about one hundred and fifty miles long, and navigable for ships of twelve feet draught for about twenty miles. Some New York Methodist missionaries have recently settled here and gathered around them a little colony of Americans, Canadians and Indians. As they do not trade, but devote themselves only to agriculture and cattle raising, the Hudson's Bay Company has put no obstacles in their way, but, on the contrary, encourages them and takes supplies from them at

The Columbia River—The Hudson's Bay Company

The Columbia River— The Hudson's Bay Company

fixed prices. For a bushel of wheat, for instance, the company usually gives fifty cents in goods, while it receives on its part one dollar and a half in money from the Russians in California.

The Americans, whose claims to the territory of the Columbia River are much better founded than those of the English, are now merely tolerated by the Hudson's Bay Company. Had the Government of the United States given the slightest support to Astor's enterprise, the Americans in all probability would still be in possession of the country; but, as it is, the United States has done nothing to protect its claims through treaties. As far back as 1818 a treaty was made between the United States and England, whereunder both powers were allowed free access to the Columbia, without abandoning their respective claims. In 1826, the United States proposed to England to draw the line beyond the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean in prolongation of the boundary on this side of the mountains, that is to say, on the forty-ninth parallel, whereunder the Columbia River would have fallen wholly in the territory of the United States; but the proposal was rejected and the former treaty was renewed for an indefinite period determinable by one year's notice. This provisional arrangement, during which the English, by means of the Hudson's Bay Company, have acquired the actual control of the country, is still in force. The country is too valuable to ever be surrendered voluntarily by the English. While the Columbia is navigable for only

a short distance, and its tributaries, on account of the numerous falls, are not suited for navigation, there is the better opportunity for mills and power plants; and better communications could easily be secured through the construction of canals. Moreover, the country is very suitable for agriculture and cattle raising. The interior trade and the coast trade with the Indians is very profitable. The intercourse with the Sandwich Islands, California, Russian America and Asia grows from year to year; and the trading vessels and whalers on the Pacific Ocean find here a safe base for action. In short, if any place on the western shore of North America seems designed by nature to be a western New York on the Pacific Ocean, it is this. The Straits of Juan de Fuca, somewhat further north, form a much better harbor. It is said that a whole fleet could anchor there in safety. These straits also lie south of the forty-ninth parallel. The Hudson's Bay Company seems to have secret assurances from the English government that at the worst the course of the Columbia River would be made the boundary, and its right bank retained; at least all the chief settlements of the company are made on that side, and buildings begun on the left shore have been abandoned. But the United States will not submit to such an infraction of its rights, and again the problem of the Gordian Knot will not be solved without the sword.

The Columbia River—The Hudson's Bay Company.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

BEGINNING THE RETURN JOURNEY—THE BEAVER

I REMAINED eight days at Fort Hall. We camped outside of the fort. Various parties of Indians and trappers arrived during this time, and camped by us. The trappers were mostly French-Canadians, preparing for a fresh campaign against the beavers. The Indians, chiefly Flatheads, led a life that suited them perfectly. They gambled and sang all night long, and slept during the day. Near the fort were some graves. In one of them rested Antoine Godin, an adventurous mountaineer and a bitter foe of the Blackfeet. It was he who brought on in 1832 the bloody fight with the Blackfeet at Pierre's Hole, related in W. Irving's "Rocky Mountains," by treacherously grasping the hand of their leader, while another shot him. The Blackfeet after that harbored the bitterest enmity for him. Some years later a band of Blackfeet appeared near Fort Hall, on the right bank of the Snake

River. Through signs they made it known that they were peaceably disposed and wished to trade with the fort. Some white men—among them Godin, who chanced to be there—crossed the river, and smoked the pipe of peace with them. While they were thus employed, a Blackfoot shot Godin from behind, and so avenged the death of their leader through similar treachery. Such occurrences are here, unfortunately, not uncommon; and the first provocation is given ordinarily by the whites rather than by the Indians. Beginning the Return Journey—The Beaver

The days of rest which I spent at Fort Hall restored full vigor to my body, which had been debilitated by my previous illness and hardships; and the leisure I had to reflect on my program for further travel, determined me to change it; and, instead of going to the Columbia River to return to the United States. Several reasons brought me to this conclusion. In our party, composed of very heterogeneous elements, many dissensions had of late developed, so that a regular separation occurred, our party, small as it was, splitting into three or four smaller ones. Although I took no part in these petty quarrels, I was ill at ease the while, and missed a great comfort on such trips, that is, good company. Moreover, I would in all probability have had to spend the winter on the Columbia, for the journey from there to California by land is very fatiguing and dangerous. Caravans go there but seldom, and then my limited means would not permit me a prolonged stay on the Columbia and a scientific exploration of the country.

Beginning the Return Journey—The Beaver

Under these circumstances I thought it most advisable to return in the fall to the United States by another road than that by which we had come up. Two of my former traveling companions came to the same resolution. But as we were all novices in mountain life, and wished to cross the country in various directions, we looked about for an experienced and reliable guide, and found him in Mr. Richardson, who had accompanied our journey up as hunter. So there were only four of us to begin the return trip. Our plan was to cross the Rocky Mountains in a more southern direction; to gradually draw toward the Mexican border and to reach the boundary of Missouri by the great Santa Fe road. Our undertaking was not without danger. Our little party, in case of an encounter with hostile Indians, had little chance of success. On the other hand, we had the advantage of attracting less notice and of being able to travel faster.

We left Fort Hall in high spirits on August 10th. We proceeded on a southeasterly course directly to the Beer Spring, sixty miles off. The road thither was hilly and even somewhat mountainous. Pine, cedar and cottonwood were the prevailing trees. At a little brook I had the pleasure of seeing for the first time an old beaver dam. Unfortunately I did not get sight of a single beaver on the whole journey; for they are very wary and from June to August, during which time I was in beaver regions, beaver trapping is usually suspended. So I can give the natural his-

tory of this remarkable animal only on the basis of reliable reports.

The beaver *(Castor Fiber)* is about two feet long, has a thick heavy body, compressed head with short elliptical ears, and somewhat oval, but rather broad tail, about ten inches long and covered with scales. The whole body is covered with a dense fur, consisting of longer reddish brown and shorter silvery hair. The skill of these animals in constructing their dwellings is well known. They prefer living on brooks and streamlets whose shores are overgrown with willows. In order to have deep water continually, they build a dam through the water, sometimes diagonally, sometimes in a convex bow. At this dam all the colony of beavers living together work jointly. Their only tools for this building are their teeth, their claws and their tail. In the water thus dammed up, each beaver family builds for itself out of the same material little square dwellings. In addition to these dwellings the beavers usually have side caverns in the bank of the stream (*caches*), where they retire when their dwellings are destroyed. When the state of the water makes it unnecessary, or when they are often disturbed, they build neither dam nor dwellings, but content themselves with these side caverns. Their dwellings, which they frequently repair, become in time so firm that they can only be broken with tools. The greater part of these dwellings is under water; but there is under the roof a space without water, as the beavers cannot remain long under water without

Beginning the Return Journey — The Beaver

breathing. The conical roof is often four to six feet thick. The interior of their dwellings they keep very neat. Every dwelling has, deep down in the water, on the side furthest removed from the shore, an opening for the entrance and exit of its inmates. Beavers work only at night. By day they do not leave their dams, and swim, when going from one cone to another, so far under water that one cannot notice them.

The beaver feeds on the roots of various water plants; for instance, a *nuphar luteum*, but chiefly on the bark of various trees, especially willow, cottonwood and birch. Only in sore need does he gnaw the pines. With this object, beavers fell trees whose trunks are even six to eight inches in diameter, solely by gnawing them with their sharp teeth, leaving a conical stump. They like to cut the trees on the shore side and then float them down on the water to their dwellings. If the locality does not admit of floating the trees they drag them overland for long distances. They gather in summer provisions for the winter, which they keep in front of the entrances to their dwellings. The females bring forth yearly two to five young. The young beavers are very droll creatures. Their cry deceptively resembles that of little children. The beavers are usually caught in iron traps, whose two springs can be pressed apart. The bait which is put on it is a mixture of beaver secretions (*castoreum*) with various spices and some whiskey. A stick or twig is smeared with this, and set upon the trap. The bait must project over the water.

The trap itself is in the water, and fastened to the shore by a chain. In summer, the beavers are lean, and their fur is poor, for which reason they are usually not caught at this time. But in winter they get fat and have thicker hair. Their meat is very palatable. The tails, which are fat all through, are especially regarded as delicacies. Besides the fur, the castoreum found in two pouches on the belly, is very valuable for its use in medicine. A persistent enemy of the beaver is the wolverine *(Gulo Luseus)*, a sort of glutton who attacks not only the winter supplies of the beavers, but often the beavers themselves. Their most dangerous enemy, however, is the tireless trapper. The beaver formerly spread over the greater part of the United States. From the cultivated portions he has disappeared long ago; and in his present home, in the Rocky Mountains, he is beginning to become scarcer. Hundreds of thousands of them have been trapped there in the last decades, and a war of extermination has been waged against the race. The consequence is that they are now found only singly in regions that were formerly well known for their abundance of beavers. It is only in the lands of hostile Indians, the Blackfeet, for instance, that they still exist in greater numbers, because the Indians do not specially occupy themselves with beaver trapping. The furs of beavers caught in the spring are best. However, many trappers catch them in every season. The green skins are first cleaned, then stretched out, dried and folded. A dry beaver pelt

Beginning the Return Journey— The Beaver

weighs usually from one to two pounds; but there are some of three pounds weight. About sixty beaver skins are bound together in a pack. Two such packs make an ordinary load for a mule. The Hudson's Bay Company has established more system in beaver trapping within its territories. It allows trapping only at certain seasons, and when beavers get scarce in any neighborhood, trapping is strictly forbidden there for some years. In regions, however, on whose permanent possession the company does not count, it allows the trappers to do as they please. But if trapping is carried on in this ruthless fashion, in fifty years all the beavers there will have disappeared, as have those in the east, and the country will thereby lose a productive branch of commerce.

On the third day after leaving Fort Hall we came again to the Beer Spring. The day was hot; so much the more refreshing the water. In front of us several smoke wreaths arose. We had also discovered other signs of Indians that were ahead of us. Nevertheless, we slept without sense of danger. Our party was too small to permit of a night watch. Exertion by day and by night would have exhausted us too much. The only precaution we took was to tie our animals at night close by; for the rest we relied on good fortune. That we kept our guns in prime condition is a matter of course. On such journeys one gets habituated to his rifle as to a trusty traveling companion. During the march the gun lies across the saddle; when one rests it is always close at hand.

Beginning the Return Journey— The Beaver

One never leaves camp without taking it as a cane; and at night it is wrapped in the blanket with the sleeper, to be ready for use at the first alarm. As disquieting as such conditions would be in civilized life, here one becomes so habituated to them that I do not remember to have ever slept more peacefully in my life. We no longer used tents, but slept quite unprotected in the open air. The weather, too, had of late become so genial as to leave nothing to be desired. During all the time that we were on the west side of the Rocky Mountains we had very steady weather. In the morning the thermometer was usually between 30° and 40° Fahrenheit; at noon about 80°; at evening about 60°. With this the sky was clear and the west wind cool. When clouds occasionally gathered, the west wind, putting forth more force, scattered the approaching storm, sometimes with thunder and lightening, but generally without rain.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE JOURNEY FROM BEER SPRING TO FORT CROCKET

WE left the Beer Spring on the morning of August 14th. I drank some cups of the sparkling water, and bade adieu to the place so endeared to me as to an old friend that one does not expect to see again for a long time. Our direction was southeastwardly. We ascended the right bank of the Bear River for four days, following almost the same road which we had taken through the Bear River Valley about a month before, after we had crossed the Rocky Mountains; but this time we generally kept closer to the river. On the first day we were crossing great stretches that had been burnt over, and round about us clouds of smoke were still ascending from the mountains, as to the meaning of which we could not entirely agree. The Indians usually light such fires as signals, when they wish to collect the scattered bands. So they are often regarded as indications that enemies are in the vicinity,

or are making an excursion. The region through which we traveled belonged, it is true, to a friendly Indian tribe, the Snakes; but they are ravaged occasionally by these implacable foes of both white and red men, the Blackfeet. We were therefore on our guard so far as the small number of our party permitted.

The same day we came across a party of trappers, whom we had already met at Fort Hall. There were eight of them, chiefly Canadians, going after beaver. Some of them had their squaws with them. They were bound for Ham's Fork, a mountain stream emptying into the Green River, and, though our road was not the most direct for them, they chose, for company's sake, to travel some days with us. Most of them were old mountaineers of great experience, and they met us with the geniality characteristic of the Canadian. We extended reciprocal hospitalities. There was no fresh meat in camp, but sufficient of dried; also toro, coffee, cocoa and peppermint tea. One of the trappers was a Fleming. He had a squaw with him, of the tribe of the Eutaws, whom he had bought at one time for $500.00, but was disposed to sell for half the purchase price. She was a little, unshapen bundle of fat; but otherwise seemed to have very good qualities, for he recommended her to us in the following terms, characteristic of the cardinal virtues of a squaw: "She is young, gentle, easy, and in first rate order." The trappers seem, unfortunately, to have adopted from the Indians the habit

The Journey from Bear Spring to Fort Crockett

of looking on their Indian wives as chattels, not persons; and the squaws themselves seem to desire no other position. On the second day we started together, and crossed the Thulick Fork, a streamlet flowing into the Bear River from the north. Under way we met a band of Snake Indians. The first who saw us, took to flight before us, but when we had convinced them that we were friendly disposed, they came in crowds to our noonday camp. The Snakes are a peaceable tribe. Their country is not rich in game, so they gather in the fall divers roots and berries for the winter. They had lighted the fires which we had seen these last days, but only to call their people together for a great hunting party. The Snakes had five horses with them. A race of several miles for a wager was immediately arranged between one of their horses and an American horse. The latter won. In the afternoon, making a rather steep ascent, which afforded us a view of Little Snake Lake, lying to the south, we went along the Bear River on which we camped at night near the mouth of Thomas Fork. The third day we stopped at noon at Smith's Fork, emptying into the Bear River from the northeast. Near by, there was a rock from which the Blackfeet several years ago had shot into Bonneville's camp, killing, however, only a mule. Smith's Fork was the first stream coming from the western mountain slope which we had touched on our former passage through the mountains. From here on we took a direction differing from that of our former trip. Instead of

returning northeastwardly over the mountains, we now turned southeastwardly, in order to reach the Green River some hundreds of miles further down. I have already mentioned, in speaking of our passage over the mountains, that the chain we then crossed runs out to a southern point. At this point, as it seems, the chain is pierced by the great eastern prairie for a distance of forty or fifty miles, not that it is an open plain, but it is certainly much more open, uniform and level than the mountains to the north and south, and does not offer such unsurmountable obstacles as they do to the passage of teams. This, as it were, pierced part of the mountains, is bounded on the south by the snow peaks of the Eutaw Mountains, on the west by the Bear River, and on the east by the Green River. The southeastern direction, which we took from Smith's Fork, carried us right through this region, which is perhaps the most convenient pass over the mountains. Going from there in northeasterly direction, one reaches again, by a rather open road, the Green River and the Sweet Waters; but we preferred to go southeastwardly, and to keep entirely off from our former route. The trappers left us at Smith's Fork. One of them, however, a native of French Switzerland, resolved to go with us. Swiss (so we usually called him) had roamed through the mountains for eleven full years, and suddenly took a notion to try civilization again, and to come with us to St. Louis. He was an experienced mountaineer and good hunter. On his accession, our party numbered

The Journey from Beer Spring to Fort Crochet

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five men. On August 9th, we left Smith's Fork and went still up the Bear River, though at some distance from it, over sandy, rather level ground, to the Muddy, which empties into the Bear River. Here we finally left the Bear River and went southeastwardly toward Black Fork, which has its source in the Eutaw Mountains and flows toward the Green River. The snow peaks of the Eutaw Mountains were on our right. They are not so imposing as those of the Wind River Mountains. The grass in this region as a rule was very poor, the game very scarce. We had not yet seen buffalo on our return trip, and the few antelopes we came across were usually wild. But our leader was fortunate enough to kill one of them on the way to the Black Fork. The nearer we got to Black Fork the more uninteresting we found the country. The ground was a loamy sand. Only cedar groves throve here in which black-tailed deer occur singly. This species is as large as the European deer, with long ears and a black point at the tail. But we did not get a shot at any of them. The Black Fork itself is a clear rushing brook, overgrown with cottonwood, willows and wild currants. Our animals found also splendid grass. From here the country becomes more hilly. Many steep, conical, naked sand hills alternated now and then with little cedar groves. From there we reached Henry's Fork, a small stream flowing into the Green River south of the Black Fork. On the shores grew pine, cottonwood and willows. The grass was good. We fol-

lowed the streamlet to its mouth. We had warm days, and suffered so much from mosquitoes at night, that we often could not get one hour's rest.

On August 15th, we crossed the Green River, which winds its way among precipitous mountains, and at this point can still be easily forded, going slantingly down stream for two more days. The road was generally steep, and led through forests of pine and cedar. The river valley at first was narrow, but widened further on. The geological formation was still the primitive. On August 17th we reached Fort Crocket. It is situated close by the Green River on its left bank. The river valley here is broad, and has good pasturage and sufficient wood. The fort itself is the worst thing of the kind that we have seen on our journey. It is a low one-story building, constructed of wood and clay, with three connecting wings, and no enclosure. Instead of cows the fort had only some goats. In short, the whole establishment appeared somewhat poverty-stricken, for which reason it is also known to the trappers by the name of Fort Misery (*Fort de Misere*). The fort belongs to three Americans: Thompson, Gray and Sinclair. The latter was at the fort, and received us very kindly but regretted his inability to offer us any supplies. For our store of meat was exhausted, and we had hoped to supply ourselves here with new provisions. But the people at the fort seemed to be worse off than we were. The day before they had bought a lean dog from the Indians for five dollars, and considered

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its meat a delicacy. I, too, tried some of it, and found its taste not so bad.

In addition to some trappers and Indians, we found five Americans here, who had started in the spring with a larger party from Peoria, Illinois, to make a settlement on the Columbia River. They had arrived in Westport after our departure, and had journeyed first by the Santa Fe road, then up the Arkansas. But through several quarrels and mishaps, the company, consisting mainly of novices, was split up into several smaller groups. The party we here met had made most progress, and had not yet abandoned the plan of going to the Columbia. But the most difficult part of their journey lay before them. So two of them, Mr. Ogley and Mr. Wood, thought it best to avail themselves of the opportunity to return now offered them, and to join our party. Our party was thereby increased to seven. Among the people of the fort I had expected to meet an old friend of University days who had been roving through the mountains these six years, and who was supposed to be at this time at the fort. To note the metamorphosis from a jovial student at Jena into a trapper would be interesting enough in itself. The presence of S. would have afforded me a pleasure far beyond this, as we had not seen each other for ten years. Unfortunately, I learned that he had gone beaver-trapping and would not return before fall. So we left the fort the next day.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

JOURNEY FROM FORT CROCKET TO THE SOUTH FORK

ON August 18th we started from Fort Crocket. Our next objective point was the North Fork of the Platte; so our direction was generally east. We went down the Green River for some miles more, and through a ravine six or eight miles long, Brown's Hole, where steep rocks of sandstone and porphyry rose abruptly on either side at a distance of from one hundred to two hundred feet. At the end of this gorge we pitched our camp for the night. The next morning we scraped together the last morsels in our meat bags and ate them in hopes of soon getting fresh meat. But our way led over a desert sand plain with little grass and no game. In the morning we had crossed the Vermillion, a little brook with reddish water, which flows into the Green River, but at evening we did not even find water. We marched on till late at night, and finally laid ourselves down, hungry and thirsty, on the sandy soil. The

Journey from Fort Crooket to the South Fork

next morning we reached the Snake River, and rested up a little. I still found in my food bag a little rice, whereof we cooked ourselves a thin soup. The other empty spaces in our stomachs we filled with wild currants and bullberries that grew along the shores. The latter, also called rabbit berries, are the fruit of the *Shephardia argentea*, a large bush, whose leaves are shiny white on the under side. The red berries in appearance and taste resemble currants, but were still quite unripe. Nevertheless they tasted famously. In the afternoon we got sight of some antelope, but they did not come within range. Our leader and Swiss usually rode on either side to hunt, while we marched slowly forward. As we reached towards evening a creek, where we intended to camp, we suddenly heard the growl of a grizzly bear quite close by. My companions had no ambition to meddle with it; but I could not resist the temptation, and made toward the place whence the sound came. All around was high grass and thick bush, so that I could not see the bear. Of a sudden the beast started up only a few feet in front of me. I quickly raised my gun; the bear stopped short, and instantly disappeared in the tall grass. All this was the matter of a few seconds. I followed the track through the brush as far as my horse could press through, and tried to persuade my companions to beat the bush together on foot; but they showed no disposition that way. Meanwhile, the bear escaped across the river. When our leader rejoined us, we finally went into the thicket, but found

only the tracks of a she-grizzly and two cubs without seeing the animals themselves. So, instead of roast bear we had to content ourselves this evening again with bullberries.

On the next day we did not find even berries. On the fifth day we started off with empty stomachs, but in good spirits. A thick mist covered the country, so that one could see only a few feet ahead. Our leader, who was riding ahead, suddenly sprang from his horse, and only then did we see a great black lump that was moving before us. It was three portly bears that saw us at the same moment, and ran away. We immediately chased after them in different directions, but the fog prevented us from following their tracks. The fog lifted soon after. Before us was a little stream with many cottonwood trees, called the big timber. There we hoped to find game. So Richardson and Swiss took the direct road toward it, while the rest of us went toward a point where we were to meet at noon. We came across some antelope, but they seemed to know of our ravenous hunger and to make sport of us. We kept pretty close to the river and had covered about ten miles, when suddenly one of us, who had lagged somewhat behind, galloped up in hot haste, and shouted to us to make for the timber as fast as we could. Although we ourselves could discover nothing, we could only take the call to mean that enemies were at hand. Without much questioning, we rushed for the timber, only a few hundred steps off, and looked for a position suitable for de-

Journey from Fort Crocket to the South Fork

fense. Our informant assured us now that he had seen a whole band of mounted Indians, one or two miles off, coming toward us in full career. We surmised that they were Blackfeet and prepared for a serious encounter. Our animals we tied to trees close by. For ourselves we looked to our weapons, firmly resolved that we would at least sell our scalps dearly. All this took but a few minutes. Then there was an expectant pause. Nothing stirred as yet. One of us crept the while to the edge of the timber to reconnoiter. "There they come," he suddenly cried, "Come here quick!" We hurried to him, and saw with astonishment a whole troop—not of Blackfeet, to be sure, but—of elk rushing toward us. They had not yet seen us, because we were hid behind bushes; but they scented us, and, with their customary curiosity, ran up to us. All at once our rifles cracked. Several tumbled, and one lay dead in its tracks. With exultation we fell upon the coveted victim. It was a fat elk cow. To live in plenty after several days of fasting, to be sure is pleasanter than being scalped by Blackfeet; still our informant had to bear many a joke on account of his defective vision. Such mistakes, however, are not uncommon in mountain life. At a distance an elk, especially if he throws back his head, looks very much like a horseman. Meanwhile our two hunters joined us, and helped us carve.

Quite systematically we now began to arrange our bill of fare. First soup appeared on the table, then cooked meat, then various roasts, and finally sau-

sages stuffed with liver, and marrow bones. Pauses were made between the courses. Our appetite was all that could be desired. Whoever had seen us in civilized life give such substantial demonstrations of appetite as we did, would have set us down for a band of hungry wolves or gluttons. But here the whole thing seemed quite natural.

Journey from Fort Crochet to the South Fork

After we had feasted and rested for about four hours, we moved on again, to promote digestion, and covered about eight miles, going along the river. "Indians!" suddenly exclaimed our leader. We listened, and heard to one side Indian speech. We approached carefully, and found a little party, consisting of Captain Walker, whom we had met at the rendezvous, and some trappers and Indians, who had come here some days ago to get dried meat. Captain Walker is an original among mountain loafers. He has roamed through the mountains, chiefly on his own hook, in all directions, and has made a side trip to California. He has taken such a fancy to this life that it is unlikely that he ever returns to civilization. We found him with pipe in mouth, and clad with nothing but a blanket, for which he excused himself to us, because his shirt was in the wash. He had sufficient fresh buffalo meat, and invited us to the rib of a fat cow. We heard, too, that great numbers of buffalo herds were before us, and that we would suffer no further want. The next morning we left the Captain's party and went over hilly prairie to Savory's Fork, a branch of the Little Snake River. On the

Journey from Fort Crooket to the South Fork

way we saw many single buffalo, and small herds; and Swiss, who is unrivaled in running down buffalo, killed a cow for us. The buffalo herds now became more and more frequent, and almost every day we shot a fat cow, of which we took only the best pieces.

On the evening of August 25th we reached again the left shore of the North Fork of the Platte, at a point we had not touched on our journey up, and in bee line perhaps one hundred miles distant from Fort Laramie. The river here was broad, but shallow, and we crossed it with ease. But we left it immediately, to go in southeastern direction to the South Fork. We reached it in about eight days. On the first we crossed with moderate ascensions the mountains belonging to the North Platte; on the fifth day, a second chain, the watershed between the North Fork and South Fork, over which there is also a convenient pass. The geological formations were again sand and lime stone. Chiefly pine grew on the mountains. On the seventh day we reached Powder Cache Creek, a stream flowing into the South Fork; and on the ninth day the South Fork itself. The country between the North Fork and the South Fork is mainly a broad plateau with sandy soil, sparse grass, and a few birch groves like oases in the midst of the prairie. Buffalo abounded, and we lived in plenty, for almost daily we shot a cow. We also encountered several bears. Once, when we had pitched our evening camp near a little grove, a great grizzly bear approached unobserved within twenty feet of our camp. At the

first alarm, before we had a chance to shoot, he was back in the woods, and it was too dark to follow him there. Another time, just as we were cresting a hill, we saw three grizzlies—a she bear and her two cubs —cozily at play. Richardson and Swiss, who were ahead, immediately wounded two of them without killing them, and followed them on horseback. My horse had been so lame for some days past that I could take no part in the hunt. Our hunters raced after the bears, and were soon out of sight. The rest of us went slowly forward. After a time Richardson came back with the skin of one of the bears, but Swiss stayed out all night. Only during the next morning did he rejoin us, and told us how first he had chased the bear, and then the bear him. His solitary pistol missed fire, and only by repeated snapping of the flint lock could he keep the enraged beast at bay, until he could get time to pour fresh powder on the pan and lay his pursuer low.

On September 3rd we came quite unexpectedly to the left bank of the South Fork and crossed the river. On the right bank there are here three forts, only some miles apart. Penn's [Bent's] and St. Vrain's fort, Vasquez and Sublett's and Lobdon's fort. The construction is the customary one; the outer walls are of half-baked brick. There is much rivalry and enmity between the three forts. In the first fort we found part of the scattered Columbia party from Peoria. In the second I met the well-known Fitzpatrick, who has passed through many an adventure during his

Journey from Fort Crocket to the South Fork

life in the mountains. He has a spare, bony figure, a face full of expression, and white hair; his whole demeanor reveals strong passions. We remained in the neighborhood of the forts for about three days. In the meanwhile I had my horse shod. For want of shoes it had become quite lame. Among the news of the day which we heard in the forts we were most interested in the account of a recent battle between the Pawnees and the Sioux, wherein only one of the latter was killed, while about eighty Pawnees lost their scalps. The victorious Sioux were still roving about the South Fork, and were very much embittered against all whites, because the man they lost was thought to have been killed by a white man who was with the Pawnees. We were therefore advised to abandon our plan of further following the South Fork and to strike out for the Arkansas. The evening before our departure, several owners of the forts arrived, bringing a new cargo of goods from the United States. Goods are usually transported to this place in great ox teams, and the same road is taken which we are about to follow to the boundary of Missouri.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

RETURN TO THE BOUNDARY OF MISSOURI

ON September 7th we left the forts on the South Fork to go southeastwardly to the Arkansas. We went up the South Fork for only half a day. Southwestwardly, beyond the left bank of the Platte, a high mountain chain arose, whose more distant peaks were in part covered with snow, forming a beautiful background for the Platte with its fringe of cottonwood, and for the wide plain that stretched along its right bank. On the fourth day we crossed the divide between the waters of the South Fork and of the Arkansas. The ground was somewhat hilly, with scattered pine groves. In the wide prairie stretching from there toward the Arkansas we saw again our first herds of buffalo. We met here two lodges of Arapahoes, who had just shot a cow, and gave us a hospitable invitation. The squaws were still cutting it up. We smoked the while, and, in the absence of wood, collected buffalo chips where-

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on to roast the ribs. After our meal we started off in company. The squaws packed their animals with admirable economy. One squaw not only loaded a horse with about three hundred pounds of baggage, but seated herself with some children on the same animal, maintaining the equilibrium with motions of her own body. A dog, too, had to carry about fifty pounds. At evening we camped together on a sandy creek. The Indians were also on their way to the Arkansas; but they traveled too slow for us, so we parted from them on the next morning, and reached in two days the left bank of the Arkansas. The Arkansas with its surroundings bears much resemblance to the Platte. It arises west of the same mountain chain as the Platte, and flows in eastwardly direction toward the Mississippi. Its shores at times are bare, at times have a growth of cotton trees. On either side stretches out a rolling prairie. The water is swift, but shallow, and is here navigable only for small boats. Many catfish are in it. We went down the left bank of the river about sixty miles to Penn's [Bent's] Fort. This country presents little variety. Along the shore we found at times wild grapes. They were larger than I had ever seen them in the United States, and tasted deliciously to us, though they were still quite sour. So also we found the red fruit of a species of cactus with a sweet mucous taste. The grass became constantly drier, only along the water did we find some fresh patches. Whenever set afire the tall parched grass burned like tinder. Through

carelessness of one of the company the grass near our camp was once set afire and we could save our baggage only with difficulty. Buffalo became more and more scarce. On September 15th we reached Penn's Fort. It lies on the left bank of the Arkansas, close by the river, and is the finest and largest fort which we have seen on this journey. The outer wall is built of imperfectly burnt brick; on two sides arise two little towers with loop holes. In the ample court yard were many barn-yard fowl. In addition, they have cattle, sheep and goats, and three buffalo calves, that peacefully graze with the rest of the herd. At the time they had no superfluity of horses at the fort, because only a short time before a band of Indians with incredible audacity had driven away a hundred head of horses. The fort is about one hundred and fifty miles from Taos in Mexico, and about three hundred from Santa Fe. Little expeditions go frequently to the former city, to barter for flour, bread, beans, sugar, etc. Then, too, much merchandise is annually transported by ox-teams to this point from the boundary of Missouri, which is only six hundred miles distant. Four miles above, there is a second smaller fort, Peebles' Fort, occupied chiefly by French and Mexicans. We bought here some Spanish flour, which rather deserved to be called bran; but as our appetite was none too squeamish, we enjoyed it immensely. On the 17th we started off again. The many wagons which go each year from Missouri to the forts on the Arkansas have made a tolerably plain road, generally

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following the river, and uniting about one hundred and fifty miles below with the Santa Fe trail. This was the road we followed. The region was the same monotonous, hilly, treeless, sandy prairie as before. On the second day we reached the so-called big timber, a spot on the Arkansas, some miles in extent, plentifully covered with trees. So much the scantier is the wood lower down. The Comanches, who play in the south a part similar to that of the Blackfeet in the north, are said to rove freely in this vicinity; but we had the pleasure to be spared making their acquaintance. On the fifth day we again came across herds of buffalo. On the sixth we reached the Santa Fe road. This broad road, almost a highway, has been gradually made by the trading expeditions which annually leave Missouri's border with many ox-teams for the Mexican city. The distance from Independence to Santa Fe is estimated at nine hundred miles. The road runs southwestwardly over the prairie. It crosses the Arkansas a little short of half way to Santa Fe. The river at that point is rather shallow, and the crossing is said to be not very difficult. At this ford we came upon the Santa Fe road, and followed it to the boundary of Missouri. The road from here on turned gradually from the river toward little streams that flow from the north into the Arkansas. The first days we went over a wide plateau, where we found countless buffalo, but little water. On September 26th we reached Pawnee Fork; the next day, Ash Creek, near which there is a solitary rock in the prai-

rie, which is accounted as half way between the boundary of Missouri and Penn's Fort, and on which some travelers have marked their names. On the 28th we passed Walnut Creek. An unlucky accident separated me here from my companions. My horse had broken down a good deal of late, and so I had to walk more than was to my liking. As the party were late about starting the next morning, I took my horse by the bridle and started ahead, in the expectation that the mounted party would soon overtake me. Later on I tried to drive my animals before me, but they often ran to one side and probably in this way brought me on a wrong road, which became less marked after a few miles, and finally totally ran out. It was foggy, and I could discover nothing of my companions. So, in order not to lose time unnecessarily, I determined to push on in an eastern direction, hoping in this way to reach the road before long. After I had gone some miles further, I saw a great swamp lying before me. Toward north and south I could see no end to it, but it seemed to extend only a few miles toward the east. The water was not very deep and the ground pretty firm. So I resolved to try at every risk to get through in an eastern direction. I rode my horse forward at the slowest pace, but it often slid down on grass and reeds. My pack animal I led after me with a rope. All sorts of water birds swarmed around from all sides. Never have I seen together such quantities of swans, cranes, pelicans, geese and ducks, as were here. The swamp

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was fairly covered with them, and they seemed to feel themselves so safe that I could have killed hundreds of them with the shot barrel of my double-barreled weapon. Just at that time, however, I was less interested in hunting than in getting out of the confounded swamp, for my horse was visibly becoming exhausted, and I was making barely a mile an hour. With trouble and difficulty I finally reached what I had thought from a distance to be trees; but it turned out to be only tall reeds, and the second half of the swamp still lay before me. My horse now would not budge for either whip or spur; so I dismounted and dragged it after me by the bridle. The water sometimes reached to my chest. With slow and measured step I moved onward; my dog swam usually in the rear of our stately procession. The sun was sinking when I finally reached the other side of the swamp. Before me lay a little chain of hills and on my side of them was a little creek with some timber. To this I managed to drive my exhausted animals. The solitude in which I was so suddenly placed, would have much disquieted me at the beginning of the journey; but now it had a certain charm for me. I made a fire in a somewhat hidden place, and dried myself out. The next morning, just as I was eating breakfast, a herd of deer visited me. They came quite close to me and gazed at me for quite a while; but I did not care to take a shot at them, partly because I still had dried meat on hand, and partly because the neighborhood is at times frequented by the Pawnees.

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True to my resolution, I continued going on in an eastern direction. The grass in the prairie was often as tall as a man, and made walking very troublesome. Nowhere could a sign of a road be seen. It seemed as if no human being had ever set foot in this country. I passed several brooks, seemingly insignificant, but with such muddy bottoms that my animals sank into them, and I had to unpack my mule on several occasions. In the afternoon I reached a larger creek with much timber, probably Cow Creek, and camped there. My animals were too much fatigued, so I spent also the following day there; dried my baggage; and made reflections upon solitude. The next morning I started early. On the road I saw the last buffaloes of the trip, got mired a few times in little creeks, and camped at night on the Little Arkansas, a creek with terribly steep banks. Only after long search did I find a place to water my animals. The next morning I couldn't find my animals in the high grass. Only on climbing a tree did I discover them at a mile's distance. With a load, it was impossible to get my mule over the creek; so I carried my baggage myself to the other shore, and then drove my animals over. After I had continued some hours steadily in an eastern direction through the prairie, I came suddenly and quite unexpectedly upon the Santa Fe road. My animals were no less pleased than was I. I found traces of my traveling companions. That same day I camped, for want of better water, at a puddle, inhabited by countless frogs. The

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next morning (it was the sixth since I had been separated from my party), I went twenty-five miles on a stretch to Cottonwood Creek, a wooded stream, that arches at this point into a pleasant semi-circle. I was looking about for a camping place, when I heard a shot in a hollow close by me. Cocking my rifle I rode closer, and found my traveling companions again, who told me that they had waited for me a day at the Little Arkansas, and had finally concluded that I had gone on ahead.

From here on, it was about two hundred miles to the border. United again, we started the next day (October 5) and covered thirty miles before reaching water. My horse was now so exhausted that I could hardly bring it into camp. On the second day we reached Council Grove. That is the name of a dense grove of deciduous trees, extending for some miles along a creek of the same name. The Santa Fe caravans usually stop here to elect their leaders and to organize: hence the name. It is about one hundred and fifty miles from the border. In these woods deer, turkeys and squirrels are found. It rained continuously; so we stayed there several days. We started again on October 9th. On the 11th we reached the Osage, a stream that was almost dried up, with wood in plenty. It was impossible to get my horse to stir from here. He grazed greedily, but from sheer fatigue would not move from the spot. "The horse has stopped," is the technical expression of the mountaineers for this condition. When left to itself the

animal usually recovers after a while, but I could not wait for that. I had to abandon this worthy animal which had carried me some thousands of miles. Some weeks before we had abandoned two other horses in the same way. However, one of my companions lent me another horse. The country gradually became more familiar to us. On October 13th we rested at noon at the same place as after our departure from Sapling Grove. Toward night we camped in the vicinity of Sapling Grove. As yet we had seen neither farms nor human beings, but the cow bells which we heard at evening near us, made sweetest music for us. The next morning we again passed the farms of the Shawnees to our starting point, Westport. Before entering the village we fired a salute from all our guns, which immediately brought out our old acquaintances. Return to the Boundary of Missouri

We had passed nearly six months in the wilderness. In that time we had covered under daily hardships about three thousand miles, had slept on the bare ground in all kinds of weather, and had lived almost exclusively on meat. Nevertheless, we all fairly overflowed with health, while the many sallow fever faces we here met sufficiently informed us that the summer had been very sickly. In Westport, we rested for a while. All, even the commonest, pleasures of civilized life had a double charm for us. After eight days I rode with three more of my traveling companions three hundred miles further, to St. Louis, where we made our return on the last day of October.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE INDIANS

WHEN a nation has perished, it arouses the interest of posterity, and historians and antiquarians exhaust themselves in researches as to the character of such a race. But the existence of a people that is merely near extinction, however characteristic its life may be, and however instructive its history as bearing on the study of the development of the human race, does not seem to call forth similar interest. This may be one of the reasons why we have not as yet, so far as I know, any adequate history of this race of man, once spread so far, which had the whole continent of America in its possession, until the advancing Caucasian race crowded them back. I do not deny the difficulties besetting such an undertaking, on account of our want of knowledge of many Indian languages, their own ignorance concerning their origin and history, the continuing hostility of many tribes toward all whites, and the hardships involved in traveling and living among them;

but it is certainly true that on more thorough study of this people a more satisfactory history could be written now than in, say, a hundred years, when mere shadows of this perished race will be moving among us. The United States owe it to themselves and to this expelled race, to collect as soon as may be all that is worthy of preservation as to this people, and transmit it as a *momento mori* to posterity.

The Indians differ in so many bodily qualities from the rest of human kind, that they have been assigned a place among the five human races into which naturalists have divided the mammalian family, man. Here is not the place to consider whether these five races are aboriginal, or whether we are descended from a common stock, from which the five races were gradually developed. As little can I decide whether, in the former case, the Indians are to be considered really aboriginal, or descendents of the Mongolian race, emigrating from Northern Asia to America. Passing this by, the characteristic differences, on account of which they are designated as a separate race, the American, are as follows: The skin of the Indian is brown-red, generally tan color, cinnamon brown, or dark copper red, but sometimes bronze colored. His hair black, straight and coarse. The face is broad, but not flattened. The features are strongly marked. The eyes are deep-seated and rather horizontal. The forehead is not high, but compressed from the sides. The facial angle is about eighty degrees. The nose is rather broad and promi-

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nent, usually straight, but sometimes with the Roman bend. The cheek bones are very high and prominent, the chin almost square. The beard is thin, the chief reason for which may be their habit of plucking it out early.

There has been much fabulous talk about the Indian character. Some pose them as Roman heroes and unspoiled sons of Nature; others as cowards and the scum of humanity. The truth is between these extremes. First of all, we must differentiate between the Indians with some of the varnish of civilization and the cruder but freer tribes of the Far West. The former have no longer a marked character. The pursuit of agriculture, forced on them by necessity, has eradicated the virile traits of their old hunter's life, without inoculating them with the mild poison of civilization. To get a correct conception of the character of the freer North American Indian tribes, let us consider somewhat more closely the mode of life and customs common to them all.

The Indians inhabiting the western territories of the United States are split into numerous separate tribes, that consider themselves entirely independent of each other. They all live by hunting, especially buffalo hunting; and each tribe claims a wide territory with very vague boundaries as its own. In addition they recognize certain districts, where buffalo usually abound, as common hunting and war ground, where various tribes roam at will, subjecting their conflicting rights to the test of strength. Between

the tribes there is perpetual warfare. Each tribe must have an hereditary enemy, whose wrong must be avenged in blood. Their warfare is rarely carried on by open attack or battle; but they stalk each other till one party succeeds in surprising and massacring the other. When attacking, they raise a fearsome shrilling cry, the so-called war whoop. The slain are scalped, that is, the scalp is circularly incised in the hairy part of the head and torn from the skull. The scalp of an enemy is the highest triumph of the Indian. The more scalps an Indian can show, the higher does he stand in the esteem of his tribe. Sometimes, when the animosity is not very fierce, they simply make prisoners of their enemies, and treat them then as slaves. Such is usually the fate of women. The chief weapon of the Indian is the bow and arrow. Through trade with the whites many of them have now obtained fire arms, the use of which they have well learned. However, all trading companies sell them only short, poorly-made carbines, and no rifles. Another weapon, peculiar to the Indian, is the tomahawk, a small hatchet which they use in close fight, and likewise purchase at the forts. In former times they made them themselves of pointed stones. Often the tomahawk is made so as to serve also as a pipe for smoking. But commonly they use for this purpose special long pipes, which they esteem as great articles of luxury, and from which the owners will part at no price. The bowl of such pipes is made of a red clay which is found on the Upper Missouri, and

which forms an article of commerce between eastern and western tribes. Smoking is a conventional ceremonial of salutation. He who has been admitted to smoke the so-called pipe of peace is in no danger. Ordinarily the Indians smoke only chewing tobacco mixed with various herbs; but if no tobacco is to be had, they smoke sumach and other stupifying herbs. Every Indian tribe has a chief, which honor is heriditary in his family; but for a warlike expedition they often choose special leaders. In all important matters the chief must consult with the warriors of the tribe; but otherwise can act quite arbitrarily, especially if distinguished for bravery. The religious ceremonials are in every tribe under the guidance of a so-called medicine man, who knows how to impose on the people through all kinds of hocus-pocus. The religious ideas of the Indians are still quite crude. Like all people in an immature state, they believe in a good and bad principle, and continued existence after death, in which the brave have unalloyed enjoyment of all the good things of this life. Various wild dances and songs are an important element in their religious ceremonies.

Every Indian tribe has its own speech. All these languages seem derived from a common origin; but owing to the segregation of the tribes and the want of any writing, resemblances may often be well nigh obliterated. The Indian's style of speech is a mixture of laconic brevity and picturesque imagery. Their

comparisons are taken from surrounding nature, and are generally very appropriate.

Concerning the daily life of the Indians we have often had occasion to make remarks in prior sketches. Most tribes live only in tents and lead a wandering hunter's existence. One family usually lives in every tent. Polygamy is sanctioned in all tribes, but only the wealthier can put it in practice. The squaws as a rule are anything but handsome, but their uncleanliness may serve to hide their charms. The squaws are treated not much better than slaves. There is no appeal from the will of the lord and master. War and the hunt are the only occupations for a man; everything else is for the squaws. The squaw must attend to the horses, set up the tent and take it down, must care for the baggage, must cut up the game, attend to the kitchen, tan leather, make clothes and moccasins, etc. In spite of these multifarious demands on their activity, they are generally indefatigable and good-natured and bear the ill-temper of their masters, oft manifesting itself by blows, with Indian fortitude. Children are soon left to themselves. I have never seen that they were beaten. They usually learn riding before walking; but in the latter, too, they develop great speed and endurance. Although their muscles do not appear especially prominent, they seem to have a degree of toughness which qualifies them for extraordinary exertions. The women are no less hardened than the men, but with them the full development of the body is hampered by too early

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marriage, often at the age of ten and eleven. These hardy children of nature suffer little from sickness, though contagious diseases, like the small-pox, at times destroy great numbers of them. Their medicines consist simply in herbs. They also have great confidence in steam baths, which they take in so-called sweat lodges, in which water is poured on hot stones.

The wealth of an Indian consists chiefly in horses. Their horses come from Mexico, and are of as hardy stock as the Indians themselves. Whoever owns no horses tries to steal some. All stealing is permissible among the Indians, but horse-stealing is honorable. Such bands of horse thieves will often follow another tribe or a caravan of whites for weeks and months, till they find an opportunity to drive off the whole herd. In addition to horses every Indian usually owns a great number of dogs, useful partly to carry loads, partly, in absence of other meat, for food. In their form and character they are closely related to the wolf, from whom they are probably derived.

The clothing of the Indians usually consists of leathern leggings and a blanket or buffalo robe, to which is added in the case of the women, a garment, also of leather, reaching from the breast to the knee. Their light leather shoes, the so-called moccasins, the squaws make with great skill, using no other tool than the awl and the thread obtained from the sinews of the buffalo. Both sexes have the head uncovered. Vanity and love of finery is more deep-seated with these children of nature—if indeed such a thing is

possible—than with the children of civilization. But one can note a vast range from the savage often wholly naked, to the complete Indian dandy, who, with his face painted with cinnabar, his hair decked with feathers, and his body adorned with beads and brass wire, will gaze for hours in a broken bit of mirror, admiring the masterpiece of all creation.

What, then, are the special characteristics of the Indians? Physically they consist, in addition to the racial marks above given, of admirable strength, skill and endurance, together with keenness of senses in highest development. An Indian sees his enemy before the white man discovers him with his spy glass. His ear upon the ground, he interprets suspicious sounds at great distances. His keen sense of smell scents smoke and traces of the enemy, before the white man has any suspicion thereof. Among the characteristics of the man within this body we are first struck by the pride with which he looks down upon his surroundings, especially upon the pale face. "The proudest thing in the world is an Indian," an old mountaineer once said to me; and whoever has seen a free Indian going through the streets of a populous city, which he is perhaps seeing for the first time, with firm, self-reliant step and military bearing, gazing straight ahead and seemingly indifferent to all around him, will admit that the opinion just quoted is not without foundation. This pride seems to me nothing more than a consciousness of his self-reliant independence. The Indian, born and nurtured

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in the broad prairie or in the mountains, familiar from childhood with the dangers of the wild life of the hunter and warrior, choosing his country wherever he can maintain himself by force of arms, and his shelter where the sky arches over him, must naturally have a sense of self-reliance vastly differing from that of the effeminate civilized being, born, nurtured and buried amid a thousand conditions of dependence. The Indian feels himself free, his wants are few, his resources lie within himself. This consciousness fills him with such pride and with such contempt for all civilization. But his indifference is often seeming rather than real, and is based on a marked Indian characteristic, self-control. The passions of the Indian are as stormy, as eager to blaze out as they can be with any human being, but by extraordinary self-control he maintains all the outward appearance of calmness. An Indian will often endure, without the slightest manifestation of pain, the most torturing modes of death, simply to defy his enemy. The Indian who seeks to conceal his feelings or his plans will not let his left hand know what his right hand does; neither kindness nor threats can cause him to break silence. On the other hand, this self-control often serves as a cloak for guile and treachery. But it must be confessed that many acts of treachery toward Indians can be charged against the whites; so much so as to often seem to afford justification for the cruelties of the former. Acquaintance with the whites seems also to have diminished the high esteem

in which hospitality was held among them. Still even now it is custom in most tribes that if even an hereditary enemy seeks refuge in the tent of the chief, not a hair of his head is hurt; though, to be sure, if he is found next day in the prairie or on the mountain his scalp is infallibly lost. The question has often been asked whether the Indian has real courage or is cowardly by nature. Whoever knows the Indian's mode of life must concede if courage is by any means capable of development in a human being, such a life is calculated to inspire a man with fearlessness and contempt of death. That the Indians usually succumb to the weapons of civilization, and the fact that a few determined whites repel their attacks even in greatly superior numbers, is not proof against their courage, often verging on fool-hardiness. Their system of waging war, moreover, often causes us to regard that as cowardice which is really plan and calculation. They consider it, for instance, folly to advance toward the enemy in open battle array; and Black Hawk, the renowned chief of the Sacs and Foxes, when present at a great maneuver in New York, during which several batteries were stormed, could not wonder enough at the idiocy of sacrificing hundreds of warriors in this way, since the batteries might be taken at night by surprise without loss of a man. The Indians

The Indian tribes which now rove through the great Missouri territory are chiefly the Kansas, the Sioux, and the Pawnees. In and about the Rocky

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Mountains and beyond them, in Oregon, live the Crows, the Blackfeet, the Eutaws, the Snakes, the Nez Percés, the Flatheads, the Pannacks, etc. Of these tribes some are friendly to the whites; with others the friendship is dubious; while still others are at open enmity with them. The last is especially true of the Blackfeet, the terror of trappers and travelers. The Blackfeet rove about the headwaters of the Missouri on either side of the Rocky Mountains, and are the sworn foes not only of the whites, but also of all other Indians. They consider themselves the lords of creation, and wage war with all who will not submit to them. Their boldness and audacity causes them to be feared far and near. Most of the whites who perish in the Rocky Mountains are brained by their tomahawks. Small parties of trappers are pursued by them relentlessly; but they also often attack larger groups, and engage them in skirmishes. When on their expeditions they unexpectedly encounter a party they either attack or take to flight, for all whom they meet are sure to be enemies. Through this unrelenting hate toward all who are not of their tribe, which they put in practice to its utmost consequences, the Blackfeet have become a word of terror among the mountaineers; not unlike that which the grizzly bear in the animal kingdom has won for himself. However, through ceaseless warfare, and still more through disease, especially small-pox, which ran its course among them some years ago, the tribe has been much reduced, and has become less formidable.

The ultimate destiny of these wild tribes, now hunting unrestrained through the Far West of the United States, can be foretold almost to a certainty, from the fate, already accomplished, of the eastern Indian tribes, where in the contact of races, true civilization collides with crude forces of nature, the latter must succumb. Civilization, steadily pressing forward toward the West, has driven the Indians step by step before it. Where war with the whites and with each other was not enough to reduce their numbers, the result was brought about by disease and ardent spirits. Whole tribes, that formerly dwelt in States where civilization is now permanently established, whose names perhaps were then as terrifying to the pioneers of the West as is now the word Blackfeet to the mountaineer, have entirely disappeared, leaving scarce a trace of their name behind. Some few have accommodated themselves to agriculture, and still live among us, the shadows of a vanished race. The western tribes still have, as yet, a bulwark against the advance of civilization in the boundless, generally sandy prairie, which extends for about a thousand miles from the boundary of the State of Missouri to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, in those mountains themselves, and in the broad sandy plains beyond them. But those obstacles are not insurmountable. At least half of the great prairie is capable of cultivation; and the want of wood, attributable less to the nature of the soil than to the frequent prairie fires and to the quantities of game, espe- The Indians

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cially the herds of buffalo, will be less sensibly felt with the gradual progress of civilization. Illinois in former days had many treeless tracts that became wooded by natural means as the soil was cultivated. But the greatest danger threatens the Indians from the West; from the settlements on the Columbia. Along the Columbia River various Indian tribes have already perished; the rest live in entire dependence on the whites.

So the waves of civilization will draw nearer and nearer from the East and from the West, till they cover the sandy plains, and cast their spray on the feet of the Rockies. The few fierce tribes who may have maintained themselves until that time in the mountains, may offer some resistance to the progress of the waves, but the swelling flood will rise higher and higher, till at last they are buried beneath it. The buffalo and the antelope will be buried with them; and the bloody tomahawk will be buried too. But for all that there will be no smoking of the pipe of peace; for the new generation with the virtues of civilization will bring also its vices. It will ransack the bowels of the mountains to bring to light the most precious of all metals, which, when brought to the light, will arouse strife and envy and all ignoble passions, and the sons of civilization will be no happier than their red brethren who have perished.

POSTSCRIPT.

In the foregoing sketches I submit to the public some off-hand observations on a journey that was made off-hand. I make no claim to a scientific treatment of my subject. Neither my time, nor my means, nor my knowledge in the natural sciences, of which I never made a specific study, would permit of this. My purpose in writing these sketches was solely to give the reader an appreciable picture of the unknown west of the United States with the peculiarities of the country and the still greater peculiarities of its inhabitants, and to present in suitable groups, as it were through a panorama, those objects which passed one by one before my eyes, with often fatiguing slowness. With romantic trimmings the picture might perhaps have been made more attractive to some readers, but I have preferred to copy nature and life as faithfully as possible, and to give due heed to the shades as well as the lights. If I have accomplished this purpose, however imperfectly, I shall feel adequately compensated for the fatigues and dangers of such a trip.

As an aid for following the geography I have appended a little map of my journey, in which are indicated the trend of the Rocky Mountains and of the streams arising in them, filled in with more detail at the point where I crossed the Rockies. As there are

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no maps of these parts of the United States based on accurate measurements, I of course cannot vouch for the geographical correctness of my plat. Still it may serve the purpose of giving a better idea of the country. By the way, in all probability we shall have in a few years a geographically correct map of the Missouri Territory and the Oregon Territory of the United States, since the Congress of the United States by a resolution only recently adopted has authorized the President to cause a scientific exploration of that region, and to take measures adequate for securing the country. It is reported that in consequence of this resolution three military forts are to be erected between Missouri and the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and that a scientific expedition, calculated for several years' stay, is to be sent out there. Such measures will soon afford travelers in these regions greater security, will increase our knowledge of the country, and will thus open a road for civilization.

A transformation of this remarkable country seems then at hand. It is perhaps only a few years until the plow upturns the virgin soil, which is now only touched by the lightfooted Indian or the hoof of wild animals. Every decade will change the character of the country materially, and in a hundred years perhaps the present narratives of mountain life may sound like fairy tales.

PACIFIC OCEAN

Columbia R.

Clark's Fork

Missouri River

Yellow Stone R.

Wind River

Platte R.

Arkansas River

Colorado

Northern Boundary of Mexico

Engraved by Bretan & Michaud, St. Louis Mo.